

Washington State Damage Reporting

Q2 2014 DIRT Analysis April—June 2014

Introduction

This Washington DIRT report provides a summary and analysis of the submitted events occurring during the second quarter of 2014 (April - June). To generate the most accurate analysis of damage events, it is important that damages are reported to DIRT within the 45 day timeframe set forth in the statute. Any damages occurring during that time which were submitted after the 45 day period will not be included in the analysis report.

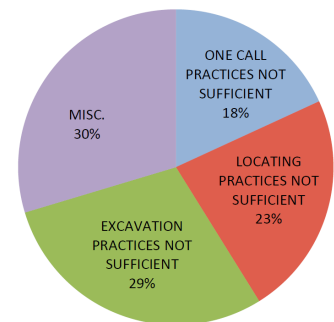
Trends

Much more data! With a mild Spring in many parts of Washington, and a big push to report damages, the second quarter of 2014 gave us the highest number of damage events since we started publishing this report. A total of **931** reports were submitted. A surprise was the **Miscellaneous** category jumping to 30 percent, and a closer look identifying **202** events that were reported as “**Data Not Collected.**”

To get a true picture of what is causing damage events, we need good information on the cause. When data is not collected, we lose the ability to analyze information which can lead to better education and outreach. **Excavation Practices Not Sufficient** accounted for 29 percent of total damages, with 114 incidents of “failure to use hand tools” and 96 incidents “other insufficient excavation practices.”

Locating practices not sufficient closely followed at 23 percent, down nearly 10 percent from the previous quarter, with 106 incidents of “facility not located or marked” and 91 incidents of “facility marking or location not sufficient.” **One Call Notification Practices Not Sufficient** rounded out the field at 18 percent, with 164 events identified as “no notification made to one-call center.” It should be noted that this is the first time this category has been under 20 percent. We believe the improvement can be attributed to the commission and Washington811’s 2014 Call Before You Dig media campaign which ran from March to July, 2014. (See more about the media campaign on page 2)

Damages by Root

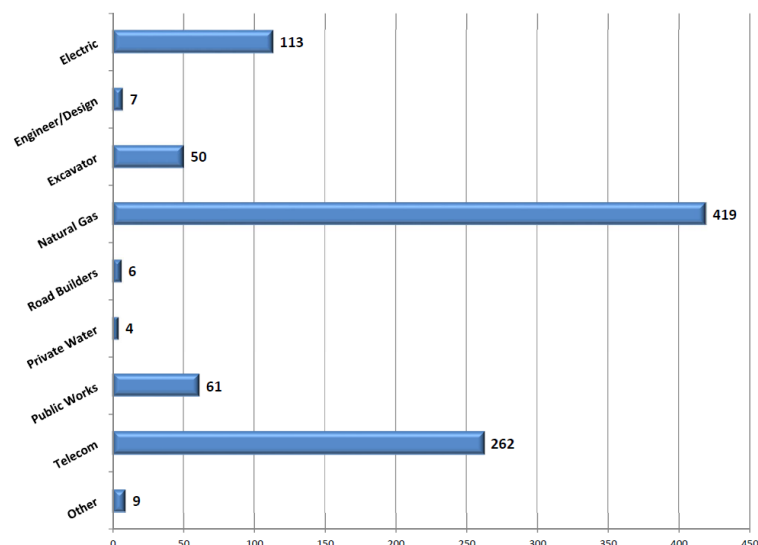


Reporting Issues

Again this quarter **natural gas** companies submitted the bulk of our data at 419 damage reports, for 45 percent of all reports filed. However, we did see a nice jump in damage reports filed by **telecommunications** companies at 262, attributing to 28 percent of reports filed this quarter. A continued area of concern is that **excavators** submitted only 50 damage reports, accounting for just 5 percent of all reports filed. As each damage event should reflect two damage reports, we want to encourage facility operators to provide all excavators who damage their facilities with information about damage reporting, and the 45 day requirement to report damages per **RCW 19.122.053**. We also want to remind companies

who record damage incidents in their own virtualDIRT programs that it is **their** responsibility to ensure the reports are being submitted to the commission’s VirtualDIRT program, as required in **RCW 19.122.053(3)**.

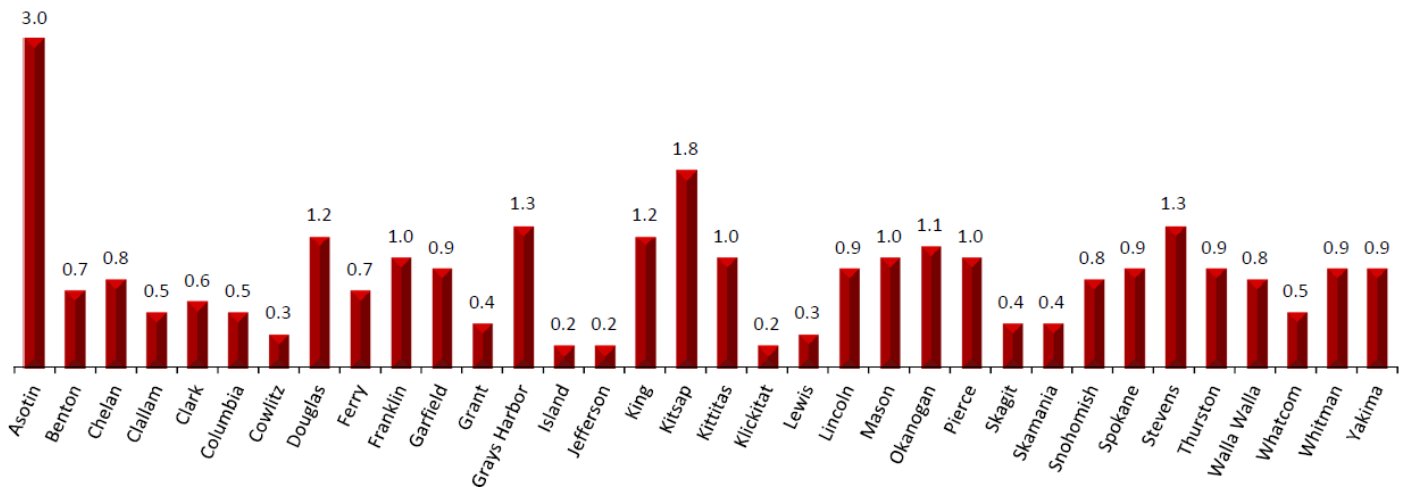
Reporting Stakeholders



Damage Events by County

The chart below identifies damage events by county, per 100 locate requests. We believe comparing events with the number of locate requests normalizes damage statistics and shows a clearer picture of how each county rates in comparison to other counties throughout the state. This chart also helps us identify counties that may need additional outreach and education focus. Ideally, we would like to see all counties below 1.0, so at a minimum two things need to happen to lower the numbers: (1) More requests for location of utilities prior to excavation, and (2) more awareness and care when excavating around utilities.

Damages by County per 100 Locate Requests



Education

Our media campaign which focused on educating homeowners and novice diggers ran from March 1 through July 31. We believe it was a successful campaign with survey results showing an almost 400 percent increase in the number of people who said they would call “811” or contact a “Call Before You Dig” program prior to digging. The safe digging message was heard on the radio and was seen on television, billboards, newspapers and the sides of buses.

We will continue providing outreach and education throughout the state with all stakeholders, including the excavation community, public utilities, local utility coordinating councils and facility operators. You can help in this effort by providing the commission’s contact information to anyone who is unaware of the requirements outlined in RCW 19.122, or in need of information about the law or damage reporting. If your organization would like to arrange a presentation by the commission, or if you have questions regarding this report or damage reporting in general, contact [Lynda Holloway](#).